1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
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A plant called hüyaa"t[a] is used both as a perfume and as a medicine. Pieces of it tied by a string to the shoulder of the shirt give a pleasant smell. It is also laid in warm water without being boiled, and the water is then used as medicine for sore eyes (specimen Museum No. 50-1883).

In case of snow-blindness, charcoal is put around the eyes, and believed to be very efficacious.

The green stems of a plant containing a white juice are used for women who have no milk. The Arapaho use the same plant for a similar purpose, and call it "milk liquid."[1]

A root called baetset ("hand," on account of the peculiar conformation of the roots) is laid in very small quantity into cold water, which is drunk by women to insure easy child-birth (specimen Museum No. 50-1946).

The flowers of a composita called niha"ăñnou ("yellow-head") or tjitjixtä"sibyiisöö are put on coals for a woman who has given birth. She stands above the fire to incense herself (specimen Museum No. 50-1944).

Another plant called niha"năñnou ("yellow-head"), which grows close to the water, is boiled, and drunk for pain in the back or in the body (specimen Museum No. 50-1945).

A root called niitason ("sharp") is pulverized, and then applied to sores in the mouth and on the tongue (specimen Museum No. 50-1838).

A rock lichen called benuatsŏn is chewed for a sore mouth (specimen Museum No. 50-1874).

The root of tyatyaniçä is obtained from swampy land far to the north of the Gros Ventre habitat. The roots are soaked in water and the black portions removed. Then they are grated, mixed with water, and applied to the neck for sores (specimen Museum No. 50-1907).

A root called kouh'ya" is chewed until a sticky paste results, which is applied to sores (specimen Museum No. 50-1919).

A fungus called tsäadjina" is set on fire, and when glowing is applied to wounds or sores. It is also pulverized, and put on the gums of children when they are teething. It is said to grow on birch-trees, near the root (specimen Museum No. 50-1837).

The roots of iniitsöö are boiled and the water used to wash the part of the body which has been burned by the application of the glowing fungus tsäadjina" (specimen Museum No. 50-1856).

Hyaa"tou-leaves, which are also used as incense, are boiled in water. This is then applied to the body to allay pain (specimen Museum No. 50-1790). This medicine is the Arapaho niiba"tou or iba"tou (fir or similar leaves), used both as incense[2] and as medicine.[3]

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part IV, p. 438.
[2] Ibid., Vol. XVIII, Part I, p. 32.
[3] Ibid., Part IV, p. 420.

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757 Na^{n}kasö ("white medicine") is a fungus growing high on pine-trees. It has a general use for any disease (specimen Museum No. 50–1796).

The leaves of ka^{n}kadyikou, growing in the mountains, are boiled, and the tea used as medicine for various purposes (specimen Museum No. 50–1897).

The bark of iinaa^{n}söönіçou is either chewed in the native state, or boiled [752] and drunk, for hemorrhages and pain in the back. The plant is said not to grow in the Gros Ventre country (specimen Museum No. 50–1943).

Tawaa^{n}nasöö-root is used for pleurisy and heart-sickness. It is said to taste sweet. The root is either chewed, or boiled and drunk. This is the Arapaho häçawaanaxu, and is much used in the age-ceremonies of both tribes (specimen Museum No. 50–1855).

Juniper-berries (çää^{n}touwun) are a cure for asthma. They are either eaten entire, or they are pulverized and boiled, and the water drunk. The leaves, called "çää^{n}touwuusöö," are mixed with the root, and then used as a remedy for hemorrhage. The leaves are also used by the doctors to incense themselves before they begin to doctor (specimen Museum No. 50–1854).

The root called niäätä^{n}, used by the Arapaho ceremonially and as an ingredient for incense, is employed by the Gros Ventre as a remedy for tuberculosis and hemorrhages. It is said not to be used as incense. The root is boiled before being used. It is eaten in the solid state, or a decoction of it is drunk (specimen Museum No. 50–1793).

The root of naw'asöö ("fish medicine") is eaten for colds (specimen Museum No. 50–1794).

Niitsiça^{n} ("hollow root") is primarily a horse-medicine. It is given to horses to strengthen and refresh them. People also use a decoction of it as a remedy for colds (specimen Museum No. 50–1795).

Niha^{n}nisö ("yellow medicine") is used for colds. Either the root is eaten, or water in which it has been boiled is drunk (specimen Museum No. 50–1799).

A plant which grows north of the Gros Ventre country, and for which they appear to have no name, is used for colds and sore throat, a small quantity of the root being chewed (specimen Museum No. 50–1848).

A root called taw'haa^{n} is obtained from other tribes. The plant is said not to grow in the Gros Ventre country. It is pounded and used as snuff in order to clear the head in case of cold or headache (specimen Museum No. 50–1797).

The stems and leaves of waasöwahaa^{n}, a sweet peppermint, are used for headache. The plant is also drunk as tea (specimen Museum No. 50–1791).

The root called wanaa^{n}sübyaa^{n} ("smelling loud") is smoked in the pipe against headache (specimen Museum No. 50–1798).

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in the operator. It was resorted to for various ailments; tuberculosis, dizziness and "logginess" were specifically mentioned by our informants. "If the ailment were located somewhere above the waist the patient was bled at the elbow joint on the upper surface of the arm; if somewhere below the waist, on top of the instep." One arm might be opened in spring, the other in the fall. In the procedure described by the Boy, before the incision was made, the patient would put his hand on the ground and hold his arm rather rigid, while the operator squeezed and at the same time rubbed down the upper arm until the blood vessel at the bend of the arm bulged. In a slightly different procedure described by Singer, the patient's upper arm was tied very tight and "the blood was worked down;" then the large blood vessel on the upper side of the elbow joint was pierced with a very sharp chip off an "onyx stone,"* and the blood would spurt out; when the patient was sufficiently bled, a bit of buffalo fur was scorched, put over the incision, and kept in place without any dressing. By bedtime everything would be "okay."

Certain individuals, such as Thick's wife, and Woman Chief, were more skillful than others at bloodletting. On one occasion Singer's husband said to her: "Come on now. I want you to bleed me." She started to do so but "just had to yell," at which he said: "Why anyone would think that it was you who were going to bleed." Coming Daylight was still more reluctant to perform the operation. "In fact, I could never do it," she said, "because I cannot stand the sight of blood."

A tattoo-like surgical treatment was described by Coming Daylight, although Gros Ventres did not practice decorative tattooing. "For a while," she said, "it seemed like my hand would come unjointed and I could not use it very well. They took a bunch of needles and pierced my hand where it was hurting me. They told me: 'Now if you don't eat anything fried, it won't turn blue.' After piercing my hand they put some root on it, and it never got sore." She added: "They do that to the head, too."

Lancing of the gums of children when teething, elsewhere de-

* Singer showed the stone she owned from which the chip is struck. It was a shiny black one, but we did not identify it.

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757 scribed was, so far as we could gather, done by non-professionals as well as by professional doctors.[9]

752 According to Coming Daylight, one old woman whom she had apparently known in her earlier years and who was suffering severely from "cut-away" gave herself successful surgical treatment. She was in great pain and sometimes could not pass water or food, and besides her grown son had just been killed in battle. In her suffering and bereavement, she went out in the hills, taking with her a big heavy sewing needle, and saying: "Well, my son did not come back. Why should I keep on living." While out in the hills, she pierced herself in the stomach with the big needle, drew out the "bug" that was causing her illness, and pounded it on a rock. After that she got well.

Other surgical or quasi-surgical treatments were resorted to in case of bites by snakes, ticks, lizards, muskrats and wolves.

If you have been bitten by a rattlesnake, the procedure, according to Thick, is to take a horse hair, hold it taut in both hands, run it back and forth to locate the teeth [sic] left by the snake in your flesh, and then pluck out the teeth. If this is done at once after you are bitten, you will suffer no harm.

When Coming Daylight was a little girl, something big, thought by her to be perhaps a large tick, attached itself to her head behind the ear. The other children with whom she was playing held her and just knocked it off with a stick, and then her grandmother put medicine on the spot and the bite gave her no further trouble.

Singer described the case of a woman to whose left arm a little lizard had attached itself and was "sucking the skin." They just cut the lizard off. Coming Daylight was once bitten on a finger by a muskrat which kept its hold and nearly bit her finger off. Finally she poked a stick in the animal's nostril and gave a jab, and it wriggled its legs and let go. She still feels pain in the finger when she holds it in a certain position. According to her, too, people say that a wolf would sometimes "turn crazy" and enter the camp. All the people would then shut themselves up tightly in their lodges, but sometimes a person would be caught and bitten, and would go around as if "drunk or crazy, wild like the

[9] Cf. Flannery, 1953, p. 142.

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wolf." One woman, whom she knew, was so bitten, right on the mouth by such a "crazy wolf." The people held the woman tight, and when the wind was from the north faced her into it. Then they made a smudge of wolf fur and made her smell it, and so cured her. This was the customary treatment for such cases, after it, "the patient is not crazy any more." 752

The enema syringe was not known to The Boy. A smooth stick and/or grease might however be introduced into the rectum, when other curative measures failed. 757

For various ailments massaging was used by non-professionals as well as doctors with power. When Thomas Main was a boy, suffering from growing pains, he would lie down near the old women who were smoking and they would spit on their hands and rub them on his legs. A sick person, into whose lodge a woman in her menses had accidentally entered, would be massaged all over with beaver castor to keep from growing worse.

Two kinds of thermotherapy were recorded, warm wrappings and the sweat bath. When Coming Daylight's sister was recovering from smallpox, she was "one solid scab." To hasten recovery, her grandmother used to heat dry cloths and wrap them all around the girl.

While the sweat-bath was predominantly a magico-religious rite among the Gros Ventre, and often used or prescribed by professional doctors, it was sometimes—how commonly we could not determine—used by the laity as a purely rational curative procedure. Mary Ereaux' mother "always used to go in" to the sweat-lodge, keeping her head out. Other old women would keep head as well as body closed in. Coming Daylight used to go into a sweat-lodge and sweat when she "had rheumatism so bad I [she] couldn't move." Singer had built many sweat-lodges for her ailing husband, but she added: "they did not seem to make him feel any better."

On one occasion four Gros Ventre warriors, on their way up north, got into a swamp, shot down a queer-looking animal, like a buffalo or a "water-animal" [a moose?]. They ate the liver and it made them faint. When they came to, they built a sweat-lodge and sweated four times—perhaps in this case as a magico-religious procedure, our field data are not decisive.

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lieved things. I am going outside to see for myself.' He asked the old woman doctor for the thing she had drawn out of the patient. 755

"So she gave it to him in his palm. It was just a little round thing. He took it, fingering it and smoothing it out. It turned out to be a little piece of white rag. It had been all balled up. On that little piece of white rag were seven marks, like needle-pointed writing, and at the end right in that rag was a piece of blood clot. The man saw this and said: 'Now I have seen something for myself with my own eyes.'

"They handed this around so that everybody could see it. Then they handed it back to the medicine woman. She said to this rag: 'I don't want you to ever come back again. You go out to where you belong.' So she wrinkled it up again and threw it in the flaming hot fire. As soon as she did that it burned up quickly.

"As soon as she had drawn it out of Little Man he felt much better. He got well because he knew that this thing was out of his system, and he quit having hemorrhages.

"In the beginning she had told what this man had put medicine on him for. This man thought that Little Man was going after his woman [the man's wife] or going with her. Little Man's sickness was not a natural one. This man had put medicine on him. Little Man had to go through with his promise [of self torture on the hill] because he got well."

"I was awfully curious when I was a child. Whenever I saw a gathering of people, I always ran to see what was happening. Crow Bull [her uncle] had been wounded in a battle. His scalp had been grazed by a bullet. They sent for a doctor whose name was Drops In The Fire. My mother and grandmother and my uncle with his wives were sitting on the west side in the lodge. The four men singers were on the opposite side. Crow Bull, to be doctored, was at the place opposite the door, with the doctor there too. 752 755

"The doctor started to sing and then he gave two drums there to the singers. He said: 'You all look at me. You all look at me. You all look at me good.' Then he said: 'Give me a gun. This thing [the gun] is the main thing. Look at it. If I don't make this work, he

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752 [Crow Bull] is going to leave you [to die], and if it works as I want
755 it to work he is going to get well.' There is a wild rhubarb which is called 'gun' and when a person is going to eat it he runs his thumb up the stalk to eat the inside of the rhubarb stalk. The doctor said: 'Now you see this gun [the real gun].' And he ran his thumb up the barrel, and it made a sound like that made when a person opens a wild rhubarb stalk. And it looked as if the real gun was laid apart. They all looked at it. And the doctor said: 'We are going to have good luck.' Then they all cheered like they were thanking him. Then he ran his hand along the gun [barrel] and when they looked again the gun was just as good as ever. Then he laid the gun up. I used to think he was a wonderful man because I saw him do this with a real gun.

"After this, the doctor took the bandage off Crow Bull and started doctoring him. He took a snake-skin which was just flat and wrapped it around the wound. All this time he was talking and praying. All this time he held the tail and head of the snake-skin together at the back of Crow Bull's head. He would kind of move his hand, quivering it at the back of Crow Bull's head where he was holding the two ends of the snake-skin together. The bullet had lodged there. The head of the snake was inside [nearest the scalp] and the tail was laid over it. He just quivered his hand about four times and at the same time told the singers: 'Not yet. Keep singing.' He was trying to work the bullet out. Finally he grasped the snake-skin by the middle and shook it, and the bullet dropped out. That is why I thought he was wonderful. That is one experience I had.

"They had a horse tied outside to give to the doctor, and of course they had a big feed. When they got through eating, all the women folks came and kissed the medicine man. My grandmother said to me: 'What are you sitting there for, not paying any attention?' I said: 'Oh, grandmother, I am scared of him.'

755 "In later years, too, at various gatherings when I was visiting with the women folks I would say to that medicine man's daughter: 'My, I used to be afraid of your father. He was so powerful.' And then that woman would jump at me for a joke."

"There is always," Coming Daylight added, "a way for those

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785 take anything like that very patiently" ["Like our Lord being
304 crucified," Mary Ereaux commented].

Very much the same procedure as regards the sweat-lodge, buffalo skull and so forth was ordinarily followed when a finger joint was amputated. The cut-off joint was offered commonly to the sun, or to the Supreme Being. The operation regularly took place inside a sweat-lodge. "A joint from any finger could be offered up, but usually it was the first joint of the little finger of the left hand. The offerer would put his or her finger on a log or stone; the operator, someone skilled in the matter, would then place a knife on the joint and hit the knife with something heavy. [752] Sage was put on the wound, to stanch the flow of blood and help healing. Children in their play, it may be added, would in make-believe cut off little fingers, apply sage and so forth.

The finger amputation complex may be illustrated by Singer's experience:

"My infant daughter [one of her three children by Iron Bucket] had been ill. I sacrificed [in a delayed fulfillment of her vow] the end joint of the little finger of my left hand. . . . I said: 'I give you this. This is what I sacrifice to save my child's life.' This I said to the sun which is God's work, His property like. . . . I held the baby and my husband prayed: 'Sun, she has given you her finger so our child's life will be saved.' . . .

"The rite was private, not a big ceremony. We went out of the lodge and the sun was about half way up and he [apparently the operator] held up my whole left hand and said: 'Now, Passing or Traveling Man, this is what she is going to give you.' There was just one old man who cut off fingers. They claimed he had [this power from] a dream. . . . He was the father of Dwarf; Dwarf died just recently.

"They had me lie face down and the others held me so I would not move. The old man [Dwarf's father] . . . told me to relax, . . . felt around, found the joint, put my finger over the lodge pole and chopped it [the end joint only] off. I did not see it but I heard when he hit the lodge pole. But there was no pain. Then they let me sit up.

"The old man said: 'Do you want it to bleed, or shall I close

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it up right away?' My husband said, 'Let it bleed,' because he was afraid it would be sore if it didn't bleed. So when the old man thought it had bled enough, he chewed some big-leaf sage, made a poultice, and put it on my finger (and/or "sprinkled powdered root on my finger," she added later). It healed quickly and never troubled me. . . . We had to give the old man something for doing that. . . . My daughter lived to be a young woman."

Self-torture out on the hills,—"sacrifice alone on hills," as it was called,—had much in common with self-torture at the Sacrifice Dance. The chief difference was that, unlike the Sacrifice Dance torture rite, it was done in solitude. The self-torturer had to have a ritual grandfather, a man who himself had previously undergone this solitary self-torture—this in contrast to flesh and finger cutting in which there were no ritual grandfathers. The "grandfather-grandson" relationship so contracted persisted after the rite was over. Coming Daylight and The Boy were in agreement that the solitary self-torture was a more severe ordeal than self-torture at the Sacrifice Dance.

Those mentioned by our informants as having gone through "sacrifice alone on the hills" were: Stiffarm; Running Crow (Stiffarm as his "grandfather" for this rite); Coming Daylight's husband Little Man (Running Crow as his "grandfather"); her cousin White Skunk, son of Crow Bull; The Boy's brother; Jim Shortman; and perhaps Sits-in-the-Middle. On Stiffarm's, Running Crow's, and Sits-in-the-Middle's experience we obtained no details; on White Skunk's, no details beyond the fact that he underwent it "because my [Coming Daylight's] son was sick at the mission school: that son died anyway," and that he did "right on this hill here [at Hays]." The detailed accounts of Little Man's experience as narrated by Coming Daylight, of The Boy's brother's as narrated by The Boy, and of Jim Shortman's as narrated by himself, to be given now, will help to fill out the generalized picture of the rite in the preceding paragraph.

Coming Daylight's account of Little Man's "sacrifice alone on the hills," given in separate fragments on four different days, is here presented just as she gave it.

"My husband Little Man [Deafie] went out to the hills. When